



# Forest Freedom Forest School Activity Club

## Handbook of Policies & Procedures

Policy Name	Owned by	Ratified by	Date	Review date
Forest Freedom Policies and Procedures	Forest Freedom	Jo Barratt	02/04/2022	02/10/2022

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# FOREST FREEDOM

## 1. Introduction & Ethos

**FOREST FREEDOM** Forest school handbook contains information, policies and procedures relating to the running of Forest School activity sessions in a safe and enjoyable way. The Handbook is made available to partner organisations wishing to work with us prior to the activity taking place. It is also to be read by all staff prior to participation. The Handbook is subject to 6 monthly review and to immediate review if an incident indicates the need for this.

Forest School is an ethos which encourages the development of children's emotional and physical development through outdoor play, activities and exploration in a woodland environment.

At Forest Freedom Forest School Activity club, we will be helping the children to connect with and learn through their local environment. The philosophy of Forest School is to encourage and inspire individuals of any age through positive experiences and participation in engaging and motivating achievable tasks. Though we can't teach all the elements of Forest School in all locations (including: fire, large tools and den building) at Forest Freedom. We can create the environment to ensure we follow the key principals of the Forest School ethos through play and tasks to develop:

- Confidence
- Independence
- Self-esteem
- Resilience
- Problem Solving
- Ability to establish boundaries for risk taking
- Communication and language skills
- Physical development

## 2. Forest School Principles

1. Forest School is a long term process of frequent and regular sessions. Planning, adaptation, observations and reviewing are all integral parts of the Forest School process.
2. It takes place in a woodland, grassland or natural wooded environment

3. We aim to promote the holistic development in all of those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.
4. We will offer learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and themselves.
5. It will be managed by Jo Barratt and Tom Smythe who has successfully completed training for the Level 3 Award Forest School Leader, Enhanced DBS checked and both are Outdoor and Paediatric First Aid qualified.
6. We will use a range of learner centred processes to create a community for development and learning.

The Forest School Principles and other information can be located at:

<http://www.forestschoollassociation.org/full-principles-and-criteria-for-goodpractice/>

### **3. Location information**

#### **Greenwood Nursery Forest School**

**Greenwood Nursery Forest School, Wandle Recreation Centre, Mapleton road, Wandsworth,**

This is a private nursery which Forest Freedom will run sessions from at the weekends. A separate risk assessment has been done for this location.

#### **King George's Park**

**King George's Park, Wandsworth,**

King George's Park is run by Enable Parks. The park includes grassland, recreation facilities and woodland. It is protected by the Byelaws to protect the parks and habitats and Forest Freedom will abide by these at all times. The Byelaws we will adhere to can be found here:

[https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/media/4703/wandsworth\\_borough\\_council\\_parks\\_and\\_open\\_spaces\\_committee\\_bye\\_laws.pdf](https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/media/4703/wandsworth_borough_council_parks_and_open_spaces_committee_bye_laws.pdf)

We will use this location Monday- Friday.

The park provides a wide range of habitats that include a mix of woodland, grassland and meadow, with a range of invertebrates, birds and mammals.

#### **4. Forest Freedom Offering:**

##### **WHAT WE OFFER:**

We are a Forest School Activity club based in Wandsworth. Offering imaginative and creative sessions for 1 – 8 year olds, and local nurseries who don't have their own Forest School. Sessions are run during the day for our Parent & Tadpoles (1-3 year) and Froglets (3-5 years) and we run after school, weekend and holiday clubs for our Froglets and Frogs (4-8 year). We also run some Frogatastic parties at the weekends! All of our sessions have at least 2 leaders (one always being first aid trained.)

##### **HOW WE DO IT:**

We get children enjoying and exploring the great outdoors, in all seasons! Using the Forest School ethos, we deliver imaginative and creative sessions to ensure children grow and develop their self esteem and confidence. Nurturing their curiosity and sense of adventure through teamwork and independent play, developing fine and gross motor skills, in a safe and fun environment. Sessions include nature exploration, arts & crafts, storytelling, sensory play, music, games and so much more!

##### **Forest Freedom daily Sessions**

On Monday, Wednesday and Friday we run daily sessions for:

Parent & Tadpoles (1-3 year olds) (Maximum 10 participants)

Froglets (3-5 year olds) (Maximum 6 participants)

Frogs (4-8 years) (Maximum 8 participants)

Current proposed timetable is:

Monday 1.30pm Froglets, 2.45pm Parent & Tadpoles, 4.30pm Frogs

Wednesday 9.45am Parent & Tadpoles, 11am Froglets

Friday 9.45am Parent & Tadpoles

All sessions have 2 leaders with 1 always having a first aid qualification.

##### **Forest Freedom Holiday Camps**

We plan to offer a holiday camp for Frogs (4-8 years) during the Holidays. Dates and times to be confirmed.

#### **5. Environmental policy & Environmental impact Assessment**

We aim for all participants to show a high level of respect for the natural environment and encourage all to be involved with decisions about the learning environment and their safety.

Where possible, we aim to purchase products that have a low impact on the environment, we aim to operate in a way that minimises waste, promotes recycling and reuse of materials. We are aware as per the bylaws no fires or permanent structures will be made and no materials cut or moved at either site. Litter is always carefully collected and disposed of accordingly, this is to include the use of a portable toilet for sessions (hand washing via cheeky wipes and hand spray.) On-site activities, will follow practices that minimise the impact on wildlife through careful thought and a full risk assessment for both sites has been completed and is available.

## **6. Risk Assessment explanation**

### **Risk / Benefit Analysis**

We believe that, while there are risks that must be considered, there are also a wide range of potential benefits that can be gained by those involved. We also recognise that taking risks is an important part of learning and developing and we want to provide a safe and supportive environment in which participants can learn about risks, challenges and personal safety. Consequently, we will use a risk/benefit analysis in our assessment of our sites and activities.

### **On Site Risk Assessment Procedure**

Forest Freedom sites must be safe and easily accessible, we will visit and assess sites before activities take place. During our assessment we will seek to identify significant hazards and take action or precautions to reduce the risk to a safe level and record these in our risk assessment. All staff and volunteers will have access to this information in case the leader is unable to attend to an incident. We will ensure all staff and partners are provided with a copy of the risk assessment prior to an activity.

When and where possible, we will carry out a last check of a site prior to the arrival of a group. Changing weather conditions and visitors to the site can create new challenges, such as fallen branches and litter. These will need to be assessed and may alter previously arranged activities.

There are five steps to risk assessment:

1. Look for the hazards, such as windblown trees or litter
2. Decide who might be harmed and how
3. Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done
4. Record the findings
5. Review the assessment and revise if necessary

## **Cancelation of Forest Freedom sessions**

Should Forest Freedom need to be cancel a session due to adverse weather conditions, we will aim to provide an alternative date. Adverse weather conditions is considered high winds or thunder and lightning (see adverse weather.)

## **Shared Information & Responsibility**

On signing up to participate with Forest Freedom we will ask parents for specific allergy or medical conditions, or any other information about their child we should be aware of. This information is made available to all of our leaders for every session on their register. We ask parents to update us if this has changed or new information needs to be shared.

## **Insurance**

Birbeck Insurance provide Public and Products liability insurance for Forest Freedom for up to £5,000,000. Insurance documents can be seen on request.

## **7. Emergency & Incident Procedure**

Emergencies are never wanted, but they are a possibility, and so we at Forest Freedom ensure that all leaders are familiar with appropriate emergency procedures. Most emergencies can be resolved on-the-spot by the leader removing the group from potential threat and providing first aid.

However, in the event of a serious incident, which could arise as a result of an injury, illness or threat, emergency services should be contacted and the following procedures followed:

1. Secure safety of whole group from further danger. Stop all work/activities if safe. Call in and locate group promptly as agreed with group in advance. If possible, remove whole group from any further danger or threat of danger.
2. First Aider to attend to any casualties with adult helper and with regard for maintenance of required supervision ratios for the rest of the party. At least one first aider must be on site at all times. A record of changes in casualties' state and anything administered to them to be made if possible.
3. Emergency services contacted as necessary. Charged mobile phones are carried by staff. Emergency services advised of grid reference.
4. Safety of the rest of group will be maintained by the remaining staff and adults away from the scene of the incident.
5. Informing next of kin should be carried out as soon as possible.
6. Inform designated safeguarding lead of incident as soon as possible.
7. Incident report and/or first aid form should be filled in as soon as possible. This should be filled in whenever the emergency plan is used even if no one was harmed and it was just a near miss.

The following information will need to be available when calling 999: The address where you are - including the postcode or OS coordinates, these can be found in the first aid bag. The phone number you're calling from (in the case the line gets interrupted and the call taker needs to call you back)

What has happened

You will also be asked some additional questions while ambulance staff are on the way: The patient's age, sex and medical history Whether the patient is conscious, breathing and if there is any bleeding or chest pain Details of the injury and how it happened **What can you do before help arrives?**

Stay with and comfort the patient

Have the patient's GP details and medical details to hand.

Stay calm

## **Legislation**

Ensure that all equipment involved in an accident or incident is retained in an unaltered condition in case it is required by the police.

Do not focus on who is at fault. In all cases keep a careful written record i.e. a log, of all facts, events, times and circumstances and retain this record until all matters are finally settled. If possible take photographs.

Do not allow anyone to interview any party member without an independent witness being present.

An incident report or entry in the first aid book must be completed, signed and dated Incidents leading to admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours or resulting in an injury preventing a person working for three or more days afterwards need to be registered with RIDDOR within 24 hours Tel 0845 3009923 (HSE - Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm).

First aid kits must be restocked after use and a stock check carried out every 6 months. Any incident or near miss must be subsequently investigated by the staff team to review existing controls and procedures.

## **8. Lost or Missing Person Procedure**

Unknown parks and woods can be disorientating, especially if a participant is unused to this kind of environment. Many woodland sites are not surrounded by walls or fences, and whilst we appreciate this sense of freedom can be beneficial to all, there is also the possibility that a participant may get lost. There are a number of ways we can prevent this:

- We encourage all our participants to take an interest in their surroundings so as to help them find their bearings. Ultimately we would like to inspire all who are able to become responsible for their own safety with respect to staying close to the rest of the group.

- Boundaries will be chosen, clearly marked and made known to the group. Going outside the boundaries will require all of the group to go or a sub group, with at least one leader
- The group will be counted in and checked at start and end of day, then at other relevant points in the day – particularly after activities that include members splitting up.
- Good communication within the group will encourage collective responsibility for each others' safety – leaders are always approachable and should be made aware if there are any concerns as to a participants whereabouts.

In the event of leaders fearing that a member of the group has gone missing:

1. All the group will be immediately called back in, by prearranged and taught "Basecamp" call, and counted and missing member determined. The time will be noted.
2. The Group Leader must ensure the safety of remaining children. An adult must stay with them at all times.
3. One or more adults should immediately start searching for the missing group member calling and whistling as appropriate.
4. If the missing group member is not found within 5 minutes, the group Leader must contact police by telephoning 999 (this will result in the emergency plan coming in to action).

Leaders must recall and write down a description of what the missing person was wearing and any distinguishing features. Any information on their last known location and time should be noted. Also if they have any special medical or learning needs then these need to be noted down. All information then must be passed to police or other agencies.

## 9. Behaviour

Everyone, including Forest Freedom staff and participants have a responsibility to protect themselves if anybody's actions are likely to jeopardise the safety or comfort of others.

We aim to promote:

- Self-esteem
- Self-awareness of personal abilities and limitations
- Respect and care for oneself, other people and the natural environment
- Co-operation and non-violent communication

### **Forest Freedom Agreement and Ground Rules**

In the course of the first session, an agreement will be sought between the staff and all participants for the conduct of the group. This will include items such as respecting oneself, each other and the environment and listening carefully to instructions when they are given. The group will be encouraged to contribute items to the agreement before it is 'sealed'. Ground rules are firmer non-negotiable rules, such as 'no violence' and will be explained along with the consequences of breaking them.

At this stage we will introduce our Frog Salute of non-negotiable ground rules:

“If I shout BASECAMP – come back quick,  
No pick, no lick – it will make you sick,  
We don’t point, only drag our stick,  
If you can’t see me – come back quick!”

“X marks the spot!” We will also tell children if a dog is off its lead and approaches them to stand still, calm and cross their arms (in an X).

We will repeat this at the beginning of every session.

### **Physical Intervention**

In accordance with the law, and our values, Forest Freedom does not use, or threaten to use, corporal punishment and takes all reasonable steps to ensure that corporal punishment is not administered by any person who is in contact with them. However, where necessary, physical intervention may be used in order to avert immediate danger to any person (including the child). Any occasion where physical intervention is used will be recorded in an Incident Report and parents/carers will be informed on the same day as the incident.

### **Behaviour expectations for leaders and assistants**

- Be a positive role model for participants, particularly with regards to respecting each person and the environment
- Encourage and reinforce caring and nurturing behaviour
- Be vigilant with regards to common sense safety
- Facilitate from an egalitarian and liberal approach, avoiding unnecessary rigidity or petty rules
- Avoid coercive or manipulative behaviour management, or that based on personal negative messages, as we feel these damage morale, motivation and self-esteem and are counter-productive to the ethos and objectives of forest school.

### **Encouraging Positive Behaviour**

We want to allow the greatest potential for each participant’s forest school experience to be transformational and therefore wish to welcome each participant from an open and unbiased viewpoint with regards to their behaviour and abilities. Whilst recognising that it is useful to have previous information about participants’ needs, we believe that no child is inherently ‘naughty’ and hope that the greater freedoms offered by a forest school environment will allow for a more flexible interpretation of positive engagement.

We will work with each group to develop a clear set of boundaries and guidelines. Each participant will have the opportunity to voice their own feelings. Talking about how they wish to be treated and listening to the feelings of others is important as it will allow the

group to work together, understand one another and ultimately become more supportive and cooperative. It will also contribute to making the forest school a safe and enjoyable space.

### **De-escalation**

If a situation arises in which participants are behaving in a way that threatens the safety of the group, the forest school leader will ensure that the following steps are taken: 1. Recount the facts of the incident as observed, in simple language and without judgement, and if possible mutually agree on these. Remind the participants involved of any guidelines they have not followed.

2. Listen to the involved party or parties, if necessary gently separate them from the group for this.

Ask about how they feel about the incident, empathise with them to help them to express themselves and take responsibility for their feelings. Ask them to imagine how they think their behaviour has affected everyone else.

3. Talk with them to establish what their needs in the situation were and to understand how they were not being met. Discuss what their needs might be now and encourage them to consider the needs of everyone else present.

4. Help them to express any requests they might have clearly and in positive language. These can be requests of themselves, others, situations or of the environment.

5. Encourage discussion of new strategies, so that if a similar situation arises the participant(s) feel able to communicate their needs without resorting to negative behaviours.

In the event of a behavioural incident, an incident form will be completed. (See appendices) Forms will be kept in the First Aid back pack, which will be kept with the Forest Freedom leader at all times.

Incidents will be reported to the Safeguarding Lead & Parent/Guardian.

### **10. Covid 19 government guidance and procedures.**

Guidance for parents and carers can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

The guidance asks us to do what we can to minimise the spread of the virus, both through direct transmission (coughing and sneezing) and indirect transmission (touching contaminated objects).

This will include;

- minimising contact with unwell individuals

- regular washing of hands
- promoting “catch it, bin it, kill it” approach to respiratory hygiene
- cleaning frequently touched surfaces
- minimising social contact

## **Unwell Individuals**

Anyone who has, or is showing symptoms of, coronavirus (a new continuous cough, or fever, or a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)), or has someone in their household who is, they should not be in a childcare setting. They should stay at home, in line with the [guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection](#).

Any child or staff member who develops the above symptoms while at Forest Freedom will be sent home immediately. They will be advised to get tested for Covid-19. While waiting to be collected, a child with symptoms will be moved away from the other children (at least 2m) to wait in a safe place under supervision of an adult.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested#arrange-a-test>

If anyone at Forest Freedom tests positive for Covid-19 we will close the setting for 2 weeks in line with current quarantine guidance.

If somebody tests negative, they can return to our setting.

## **Hand Washing**

We will encourage everybody to wash their hands regularly and thoroughly with a cheeky wipe and sanitiser spray for at least 20 seconds. We will also have hand sanitiser available for use. We will also have fresh water on site at all times using our large water containers.

## **Respiratory Hygiene**

We will encourage all participants to avoid touching their face and putting their fingers in their mouths as much as is reasonable. We will have tissues and wipes available to use, and a rubbish bag for them to be disposed of. Hands will be washed after use of tissues.

## **Cleaning Surfaces**

We will regularly clean frequently touched surfaces such as handles etc. We will not be using toys and equipment which is difficult to regularly clean such as soft toys. As we

are outdoors all day, this should not be too much of a large task. We will take extra care to make sure that we regularly clean our hand washing water tank, drinking water container and any other equipment.

We will not be using our plastic cups for drinks. Please ensure you send your child with their own drink container each day.

As for things that children bring with them, we would ask that they do not bring toys from home. Also please ensure their things are cleaned each day, lunchbox, drinks bottle, etc.

### **Drop off and collection**

We also need to consider minimising social contact between families during drop off and collection times. To do this we request that we all meet outside Parkside gym where we will take the children to the location we will be using that day. Please wait at least 2 metres away from other people in the car park area.

We will complete a register on arrival

### **PPE**

- a facemask should be worn if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained from someone with symptoms of coronavirus
- if contact is necessary, then gloves, an apron and a facemask should be worn
- if a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of fluids entering the eye from, for example, coughing, spitting or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn.

## **11. Food & Hygiene**

Forest Freedom Camps will allow children to bring snacks and their lunch. Eating represents a social time for children and adults and helps children to learn about healthy eating.

Children should wash hands prior to eating and take their rubbish with them. Individuals should bring their own food & drink to the session and sharing of food is not permitted at this time, due to Covid 19 restrictions.

If food is provided by Forest Freedom, we aim to provide nutritious food, which meets the children's individual dietary needs and we will provide this in a safe way.

Before a child attends forest freedom, we find out from parents their children's allergies. All staff are fully informed about individual children's allergies.

## 12. Dogs & Members of the Public

King George's Park is open to the public and so there may well be other people out enjoying the woods. As our ground rules state we will teach children in every session how to deal with a loose dog with our "X marks the spot" policy. Most people will be happy to pass our group without hindering activities, but there is the possibility of unwanted attention from a passer-by. In this event a leader will step in and assure the member of public that if they wish to raise any issues, then they should contact the Enable office at a time convenient to both parties, and pass on our licence number. If the situation escalates to a dangerous level staff will use a mobile phone to call the police and use the Emergency & Serious Incident Procedure.

Some participants may be unused to or even afraid of dogs. If this is known to be the case for any particular participants please inform any/all leader(s) prior to arrival on site. If a dog appears the fearful participant can be joined by at least one member of staff. If a dog approaches the group and appears to likely to cause trouble all participants will be advised not to run or act excitably – adhere to "X marks the spot" keep their voices low and stay as still as possible. A leader will speak to the owner.

## 13. First Aid & Medical consent

The Forest School leader (Jo Barratt) will be the designated First aider and is qualified in Paediatric First Aid for Forest Freedom. She will ensure the first aid kit is kept clean and is replenished and items replaced when necessary. I regularly check expiry dates and keep a log of all items and dates. Sterile items are kept sealed until needed and once opened any unused items are discarded. The first aid kit is kept in the emergency rucksack and all adults are made aware of its location during sessions. Accident/incident forms will be completed.

## Consent & Medical Declaration Policy

Forest Freedom has a strict policy for gaining consent and medical information from all participants prior to them joining any sessions.

- The online consent forms require all adults/child's' parents/guardians to give the following information;
- Attendees name
- Date of birth,
- Parent/guardian's name
- Home address, postcode & telephone number.
- Attendees emergency contact information. In the case of children, the connection to the child is also required.
- Attendees medical details.

- Whether or not the attendee has a disability that we should be aware of.
- Whether or not the attendee suffers from any medical conditions.
- Whether or not the attendee will require any medication during the session.
- Whether or not the attendee suffers from any allergies.
- Any further information that should be divulged (e.g. dietary needs, fears, etc.).  
The form then asks that the person completing the form to agree to the following conditions;
- I agree to/to my child taking part in Forest Freedom Sessions.
- I agree to my child abiding by any rules set by the Forest Freedom Leader or Assistants.
- I intend to supply my children with the appropriate clothing and footwear.
- In the event of an emergency if I am unable to be present I give / do not give my permission for necessary first aid to be given to my child if required.

Without this form being completed to the satisfaction of the Forest Freedom, the person will not be allowed to join the session and may be asked to leave.

## 14. Manual handling

Manual handling injuries can occur when weight is lifted with an awkward posture or aggravates an existing injury.

Our procedure is to avoid manual handling activities when possible by decanting large boxes into smaller weights to lift more easily. Planning the movement of any item often prevents injury.

### Manual Handling Guidelines:

- Think before lifting/handling  
Plan the lift. Can handling aids be used? Where is the load going to be placed? Will help be needed with the load? Remove obstructions such as discarded wrapping materials. For a long lift, consider resting the load midway on a table or bench to change grip.
- Consider using a mechanical aid  
Such as a forklift or sack truck
- If load is going to be moved manually  
Keep the load close to the body for as long as possible while lifting. Keep the heaviest side of the load next to the body. If a close approach to the load is not possible, try to slide it towards the body before attempting to lift it.

- Adopt a stable position  
The feet should be apart with one leg slightly forward to maintain balance (alongside the load, if it is on the ground). Be prepared to move your feet during the lift to maintain stability.
- Get a good hold  
Where possible the load should be hugged as close as possible to the body. This may be better than gripping it tightly with hands only.
- Start in a good posture  
At the start of the lift, slight bending of the back, hips and knees is preferable to fully flexing the back (stooping) or fully flexing the hips and knees (squatting).
- Don't flex the back any further while lifting  
This can happen if the legs begin to straighten before starting to raise the load.
- Avoid twisting the back or leaning sideways  
Especially while the back is bent. Shoulders should be kept level and facing in the same direction as the hips. Turning by moving the feet is better than twisting and lifting at the same time.
- Keep the head up when handling  
Look ahead, not down at the load, once it has been held securely.
- Move smoothly.  
The load should not be jerked or snatched as this can make it harder to keep control and can increase the risk of injury.
- Do not lift or handle more than can be easily managed  
There is a difference between what people can lift and what they can safely lift. If in doubt, seek advice or get help.
- Put down, and then adjust  
If precise positioning of the load is necessary, put it down first and slide it into the desired position.

## 15. Weather

The Ethos of Forest School is to play outdoors in all weathers, however there are certain weather conditions which will affect the running of Forest Freedom.

The Forest Freedom leader will check the Met Office weather app prior to Forest School sessions. We will not run Forest Freedom if the conditions are deemed dangerous such as in high winds, thunder storms, or during periods of extreme cold. However Forest Freedom sessions will be carried out in other weather conditions such as heavy rain and sunshine. When it is wet a shelter will be built immediately by a trained adult so that there is a sheltered area that is available from the start that can be used if needed.

The chart below shows the Beaufort Wind scale, which lets us know what to expect visually. We will always go with Wind gusts of 34mph as a decision maker on whether it is safe to run a Forest Freedom session.

Beaufort Force	Description	When You See or Feel This Effect	Wind (mph)
0	Calm	Smoke goes straight up	less than 1
1	Light air	Wind direction is shown by smoke drift but not by wind vane	1-3
2	Light breeze	Wind is felt on the face; leaves rustle; wind vanes move	4-7
3	Gentle breeze	Leaves and small twigs move steadily; wind extends small flags straight out	8-12
4	Moderate breeze	Wind raises dust and loose paper; small branches move	13-18
5	Fresh breeze	Small trees sway; waves form on lakes	19-24
6	Strong breeze	Large branches move; wires whistle; umbrellas are difficult to use	25-31
7	Moderate gale	Whole trees are in motion; walking against the wind is difficult	32-38
8	Fresh gale	Twigs break from trees; walking against the wind is very difficult	39-46
9	Strong gale	Buildings suffer minimal damage; roof shingles are removed	47-54
10	Whole gale	Trees are uprooted	55-63
11	Violent storm	Widespread damage	64-72
12	Hurricane	Widespread destruction	73+

## 16. Clothing, PPE

**‘There is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing’**

To ensure that the children are sufficiently protected from the weather and the forest environment we require children to be wearing appropriate clothing and footwear. Clothing will get muddy so old home clothes are required.

We require children to have long sleeves and long trousers in both winter and summer. This is particularly important in the summer to protect from tick bites, sun burn, stinging nettles and thorns.

**Cold weather Clothing** The general rule is to wear lots of layers which keep in the heat and can be removed if needed. Children require:

- Warm hat
- Gloves NB not mittens
- Vest & Long sleeved t-shirt/shirt
- Jumper/fleece
- Waterproof coat
- Trousers that cover the legs to protect from nettles and thorns
- Waterproof trousers
- Wellies with warm socks/walking boots
- Thermal underwear

**Warm weather Clothing**

- Sun hat
- Sun cream applied before session
- Light long sleeved top
- Light long trousers
- Wellies or enclosed shoes/boots (no sandals)

Forest Freedom leaders and assistants will ensure all the children are appropriately dressed before commencing Forest Freedom sessions & parents will be provided with a kit list in advance. Children should arrive in their Forest School clothes and may bring a change of clothing/footwear with them.

## **17.Tool Safety**

General rules for tool use:

All tools have a separate risk assessment

The Forest Freedom Leader is nominated to ensure safe storage of tools when out (always kept in tool section of rucksack.)

All staff ensure safe storage back at storage shed

All tools should be signed out when in use

We do not walk around with tools, wherever possible

Tools should be kept clean with oily rag, sharp and checked before every use

Tools should only be used with a designated trained adult  
Tool talk should be used at the beginning of every session for every tool.

**Potato Peelers:**

Children must be supported 1:1 or 1:2 depending on age range by an adult, preferably the Forest Freedom Leader, initially demonstrating good practice  
Users should be sat down in a designated area  
There should be a tool and an arms length away from any other person.  
Potato Peelers should be used away from the body  
Ensure Potato Peelers are clean and covered when not in use.

**Knives:**

Children must be supported 1:1 or 1:2 depending on age range by an adult, preferably the Forest Freedom Leader, initially demonstrating good practice  
Users should be sat down in a designated area  
There should be a tool and an arms length away from any other person.  
Knives should be used away from the body  
Ensure knives are clean and covered when not in use.

**Secateurs:**

Children must be supported 1:1 by an adult preferably the Forest Freedom Leader and good practice demonstrated  
Use in a designated area, away from others  
There should be a tool and an arms length away from any other person (unless the other person is holding the material to be cut.)  
Secateurs must be kept closed except when in use  
Secateurs must only be used above the ground if possible.

**Ropes and Knots:**

All equipment to be regularly checked for fraying etc.  
Children should not wrap rope around their bodies  
Children should be encouraged to learn to tie and undo simple knots  
If tying between trees, the rope should be able to be seen and not cause a trip hazard.

## 18.Safeguarding Children/ adults

All staff members are DBS checked and are also asked to read the following when they join Forest Freedom.

“The welfare of the child is paramount” – Children Act 1989

Children and young people learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We aim to provide a high quality setting which is welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence. We take all necessary steps to keep children and young people safe, ensure staff understand that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility and that we deliver a child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding.

### Policy Aims

For the purpose of this policy the “Working Together To Safeguard Children” definition of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children will be used and is defined as;

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children’s health and development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

### Statutory guidance this Policy is informed by

This policy and set of procedures works in line with the following statutory guidance and legislation which should be read in conjunction with the policy:

- [Keeping Children Safe In Education - \(statutory guidance\)](#)
- [Working Together To Safeguard Children - \(statutory guidance\)](#)
- [Multi-agency statutory guidance on Female Genital Mutilation](#)
- [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused \(non-statutory guidance\)](#)
- [The Prevent Duty - Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers](#)
- [Information-sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services](#)
- [Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners](#)
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#)
- [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines](#)
- [Children missing education Statutory guidance for local authorities](#)

In addition, the centre takes into account the procedures and practice of the local authority as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by Wandsworth council.

## Procedures for reporting concerns

### Step 1 **REPORT CONCERN**

- Report your concerns directly to a member of the safeguarding team, as soon as you are able. This must be done either in person, or by telephone.
- In the first instance our Designated Safeguarding Lead Jo Barratt (078268730128)
- If the DSL is unavailable, or you wish to report them or Forest Freedom please report to our Wandsworth council on 0208 8717899 or email: [mash@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:mash@wandsworth.gov.uk)
- **Outside of office hours-** urgent concerns only can be referred through the Emergency Duty Service using 0208 8716000
- If marks or injuries have been observed on a child, record these on a body map. (Do not take photographs)
- If you are concerned that a child might be in immediate danger or at risk of significant harm you must act immediately. Phone 999.

### Step 2 **RECORD CONCERN**

For day staff:

- Write down the concern as soon as possible.
- Make sure the date and time is correct and then email Jo Barratt ([info@forestfreedom.co.uk](mailto:info@forestfreedom.co.uk))
- **Prior to this concerns should have already been verbally reported to the DSL.**
- Remember to record the full date and time, location, your name and role and keep your record as factual as possible. Use the child's own words where applicable and enclose any direct quotes in quotation marks.
- If marks or injuries have been observed on a child, record these on a body map. (Do not take photographs)
- If a concern/ disclosure form is unavailable, handwritten notes can be made on a piece of paper. (This must be retained, even if the notes are subsequently written up onto a form).

### Step 3 **RECORD ACTION**

- Record what action you are taking, for example record the name of the member of the safeguarding team you have reported the concern to.
- The original concern form should be passed to the DSL. Copies should not be retained by you.
- All written records of concerns/disclosures are stored securely by the safeguarding team. Parents /carers are informed of this once contacted to discuss the concerns. See section Parents and carers also.

### Step 4 **FOLLOW UP OR CHALLENGE**

- You should receive feedback about what action, if any is being taken in response to your concern. If you do not receive feedback or you feel that the situation is not improving for

the child you have a duty to challenge the DSL / deputy DSL. See section on 'Escalation'.

## Dealing with a disclosure from a child

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff should:

- Listen to what the child is saying, without displaying any signs of shock or disbelief
- Allow the child to talk freely without interrupting
- Reassure the child but do not make promises about keeping the information a secret
- Reassure the child that this is not their fault
- Only ask questions if you need to clarify, take care not to put words in the child's mouth by asking leading questions
- Stress to the child that they have done the right thing by telling you and explain what you will do next

Action to take following the disclosure

- Staff follow the our usual safeguarding procedures. See 'Worried About a Child'.
- If the disclosure includes information of concern regarding an adult working in the school, refer to 'Worried About An Adult' and follow the steps outlined there.

For the full details of our Safeguarding policy in Wandsworth please see:

[www.wscp.org.uk](http://www.wscp.org.uk)

## 19. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy

Forest Freedom is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce, training cohorts and clients and eliminating unlawful discrimination. The aim is for our learners and leaders to be truly representative of all sections of society, and for each employee and learner to feel respected and able to give their best. Forest Freedom - in providing services - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of the public.

The policy's purpose is to:

- Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment and care
- Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation
- Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination.

Forest Freedom commits to:

- Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense
- Create an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff and clients are recognised and valued. This commitment includes training employees and trainees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public
- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisations activities. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice. Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.
- Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- Decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
- Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
- Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by the company direct

## 20. Accident/Incident Form

# Accident/ Incident Form

Please complete following the accident and before the end of the session. Once complete please return to Jo and inform parent.

Date of Accident:		Name of person involved in accident:	
Place of Accident:		Equipment involved:	
Injury sustained:			
<u>How the accident happened:</u>			
<u>Action taken following the accident?</u> First aid administered by a first aider wearing gloves and face mask? Allergies checked?			
<u>Parents/carers contacted?</u> Yes/No			

Signed by leader reporting accident: ..... Date:.....

Signed by parent/carer of child: .....Date:.....

## 21. Risk Assessment for King George's Park

# Forest Freedom Risk Assessment – King George’s Park

## Completed by Jo Barratt (01.03.2022)

Hazard/Activity	Who might be harmed and how	Control measures in place
<b>GENERAL</b>		
Bites and stings from insects (e.g. bees) and plants (e.g. stinging nettles).	Children and adults being bitten or stung and having a reaction.	Warn not to catch bees / wasps and be aware of stinging nettles and/or any other relevant plants. Long trousers and closed footwear to be worn.
Allergies or children’s existing conditions.	Children with allergies being exposed to allergens.	All staff to be aware of any known allergies or existing conditions and be aware of treatment required and their medical plan (all stored on onsite offline tablet from child registration.)
Eating Pack lunches	Children getting bacteria from dirty hands	Applying anti-bacterial gel before meals and washing hands with wipes
Cyclists on way to Forest Freedom Session	Children & cyclists- Crashed into	Make children very aware of the risks of cycle lanes and discussing the dangers of cycles every time they come to Forest Freedom.
Intruders	Children could be led astray	Children told and asked to repeat boundaries and Forest Freedom rules (must always be able to see leader.) Keep clear boundaries during sessions and ensure leaders can see children at all times. Regular headcount. Follow missing children policy protocol. ‘Children to learn 1,2,3 where are you?’ and adults use a ‘count and shout’ to communicate when out of view of each other and use of the word ‘basecamp’ to encourage children to gather.
Dogs	Children and leaders may get bitten	Explain the possible dangers to the children. Explain the importance of a crossed arm pose and tell the children to

Hazard/Activity	Who might be harmed and how	Control measures in place
		stay still and not interact with the dog.
Missing child- A child may wander off or go missing during a Forest Freedom session.	Children- Going missing	Children told and asked to repeat boundaries and Forest Freedom rules (must always be able to see leader.) Regular headcount. Follow missing children policy protocol. 'Children to learn 1,2,3 where are you?' and adults use a 'count and shout' to communicate when out of view of each other and use of the word 'basecamp' to encourage children to gather.
Extreme weather	Children and adults may be at risk of hypothermia, sun stroke etc. There is also a risk from lightning and strong wind (see above-falling branches)	Appropriate clothing to be worn and parents told what this is. We will also have additional spare clothing, hand warmers, sun cream and plenty of water available. When necessary, the session to end early if the children's wellbeing is compromised.
Rough and tumble play	Children and adults may fall/ get knocked into branches, sticks, logs etc	Monitor the play and explain to children what risks may be present and help them find a more open space. First aid to be applied where appropriate.
Small tools Potato peelers, knives, secateurs, tent pegs (use with elder sticks)	Children being cut using tools	Safety talk given and repeated. Close supervision. First aid given where needed.
Lack of light in the evening	Adults and children are more likely to hurt themselves by tripping over things or bumping into low branches or sharp twigs for example	End the sessions early to avoid the darkness if light becomes dangerous.
Small objects such as stones that a child may put in their mouths	The younger children- from choke on small objects such as stones	Ensure good supervision of children and education on "no lick, no pick" to include stones.
Ensuring protection of all wildlife, fauna and flora	Impacting natural habitats, inhabitants of the site	All children to be educated on "no lick, no pick" policy. Only deadwood to be moved and not to impact any natural habitat. The

Hazard/Activity	Who might be harmed and how	Control measures in place
		core of our ethos.
Waterproofs	Children can trip and injure themselves if the waterproofs are not put on properly or are too big.	Adults are to check waterproofs are put on correctly (for children who have dressed themselves). Children to be wearing the right size waterproofs, and to inform parents if we feel they need different clothing.
Covid-19	Children and adults may catch and spread the disease	Warm water, liquid soap and cheeky wipes with us at all times and all adults to carry hand sanitizer with them to be used whenever appropriate. All shared equipment will be cleaned before a new group attend. Equipment that is harder to clean is kept separated for each group e.g. tarpaulins and ropes. All staff to have read and comply with our Forest Freedom COVID-19 policy.
<b>GROUND LEVEL</b>		
Dangerous litter	Children and adults	Forest Freedom leader to do litter pick (with litter picker and gloves) before any session to ensure there is no dangerous litter in area
Litter picking with children. Sharp objects	Children- Cut by sharp objects	Introduce rules that no litter should be touched by a child and only be picked up using litter pickers. All rules to be talked through before entering area and in pre registration. First aid applied as and when necessary.
Exploring the site- uneven ground, branches and tree roots on the ground. Branches and shrubs at eye level.	Children- trips and falls	Children well supervised, awareness talks and reminders. There will always be at least 2 team members, 1 always being first aid trained with a first aid kit and mobile phone. Long trousers and closed footwear to be worn.
Mushrooms and fungi	Children eating poisonous mushrooms	"No pick, no lick policy" - Ensure children do not eat anything they find and keep their hands out of their mouths and wash them thoroughly if they do.
Toxic Plants	Children and adults	Site to be inspected prior to sessions, team

Hazard/Activity	Who might be harmed and how	Control measures in place
	coming into contact with toxic plants	to be aware of poisonous plants and children taught “no pick, no lick”, and to keep fingers out of their mouths.
Building dens or other activities using sticks and branches – risk of sharp objects.	Children- branches falling on children.	Children to be aware of dangers and carry / hold sticks carefully, being aware of others around them. Injuries / accidents to be dealt with accordingly.
Animal droppings	Children getting bacteria from mess	“No pick, no lick.” Children to be made aware not to touch or pick up any animal droppings. Hands to be cleaned and anti bac gel to be used.
<b>SHRUB LEVEL</b>		
Sharp branches and thorns	Children being cut and scratched by branches or thorns	Leader to survey site before and avoid any area of risk. Children to be made aware. Any cuts or injuries to be dealt with by first aider on site. In the event of severe injuries 999 to be called.
Tree climbing	Children may fall from a dangerous height	An adult should be close by, the children should climb independently when moving vertically although an adult can both advise and problem solve with children when they are stuck, only one child on each segment of a tree when children are continually moving on higher branches. Identify trees not to be climbed, and children not to climb above 1.5 metres.
Ropes	Children may get the ropes caught around their necks	The ropes are never tied up in loops large enough for a child’s head to fit through. We will ensure the children are well supervised during this activity.
<b>CANOPY LEVEL</b>		
Falling branches (canopy level)	Children being hit by falling branches, especially in or after high winds and lightning.	Site checked in advance of every session by Forest Freedom leader to ensure no fallen or dangerous branches. Check wind conditions before every Forest Freedom session and move to an open grassy space if the wind is too strong or there is lightning.